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ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN NORTH AMERICA: WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

by

Rupe Sunner
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Approval

Name:	**Rupe Sunner**
Degree:	**Master of Arts (Criminal Justice)**
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Examining Committee:

Chair: _____

Zina Lee, Ph.D

_____

Darryl Plecas, Ed. D.
Senior Supervisor

_____

Irwin Cohen, Ph. D.
Supervisor

_____

Bill MacGregor, Ed. D.
External Examiner

Date Defended/Approved: _____

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University of the Fraser Valley
Abbotsford, B.C.

Abstract

This paper presents an extensive examination of the past findings and contributions made by scholars in the area of academic dishonesty in North American post secondary institutions. The purpose of this major paper is to provide an understanding of what scholars have come to know about the nature and quantity of academic dishonesty and how to best respond to this behaviour. The paper begins by outlining the challenges with defining academic dishonesty and what is understood about its prevalence. The paper then explores the common characteristics of those who engage in academic dishonesty, why students choose to engage in this type of deviant behavior, and what factors contribute to academic dishonesty. The role of technology is also considered to understand its role in the evolution of academic dishonesty. Based on these findings, the major paper concludes by offering policy recommendations that could provide a framework for addressing this form of deviance in academia.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The majority of college students are involved in some form of academic dishonesty during their post secondary education (Wowra, 2007). As a result, academic dishonesty is considered an epidemic in universities around the world (Burke, Polimeni, & Slavin, 2007; Desruisseaux, 1999; Embleton and Helfer, 2007; Polimeni and Slavin, 2007; Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Students are finding it easier, more convenient, and increasingly tempting to jeopardize their academic integrity because of new and emerging technologies that contribute to academic dishonesty (Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007). Unfortunately, this has further complicated the study of academic dishonesty. Most North American universities focus on detection and punishment in order to deter students from engaging in academic dishonesty (Gulli, Kohler, & Patriquin, 2007). Many researchers have indicated that academic dishonesty is an issue that should be of great concern to universities, and society in general, because universities have a responsibility to produce ethical and responsible students who respect not only the work of others, but the reputation of academia (Burke, Polimeni, & Slavin, 2007; Desruisseaux, 1999; Embleton and Helfer, 2007; Polimeni and Slavin, 2007; Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002; McCabe and Makowski, 2001). Moreover, society does not want to see immoral students become unethical professionals who could potentially affect their lives as, for example, a doctor or an engineer.

This major paper will provide an analysis of the research literature on academic dishonesty in order to provide a nuanced understanding of what scholars have come to know about academic dishonesty, who commits this form of deviance, its relationship to other forms of deviance, and how to most effectively prevent and respond to this form of deviance. The paper

will be divided into eight chapters. The first chapter will highlight the difficulty in defining academic dishonesty. While examining how often this type of deviance occurs within post secondary institutions, it will become clear that the level of academic dishonesty varies substantially depending on the definitions used. The paper will also include a discussion of the different factors considered by experts to affect levels of academic dishonesty and who is likely to engage in this form of deviance. Technological advances, such as the internet and the World Wide Web, will also be considered as they have been identified as potentially fostering academic dishonesty.

In order to further understand this phenomenon, the next chapter will explore the various reasons why students engage in academic misconduct. It is also important to recognize why academic dishonesty should be of concern to academic institutions and criminologists, more specifically. Given this, Chapter Four is devoted to discussing the importance of ethics, morals, and responsibility within academia and beyond. Chapter Five explores how North American universities currently address academic dishonesty and whether these policies and approaches are optimal. This will be followed by a chapter outlining the main policy recommendations for post secondary institutions so that they can implement a proactive style of addressing academic dishonesty. The final chapter of this major paper will contain concluding thoughts about academic dishonesty and how academia and society might frame and rethink its views of academic misconduct.

Chapter 1: The Definitions and Prevalence of Academic Dishonesty

It is extremely important to properly define academic dishonesty. However, this has proven to be quite challenging as there is no consensus about what specific behaviours should be included in such a definition (Gilbert, Spencer, Pincus, & Silva, 2008). The challenge is that one person may define a specific behaviour as academic dishonesty while another considers that same behaviour acceptable (Brates, Davies, Murphy, & Bone, 2005). For example, behaviours such as plagiarism, copying from someone else during an exam, stealing an exam, or buying a paper would generally be agreed upon as academically dishonest behaviour (Gilbert et al., 2008). However, actions such as copying a few homework questions from a classmate or submitting the same paper for two classes are more ambiguous behaviours that may not necessarily be described as academic dishonesty by everyone (Gilbert et al., 2008). There are also substantial differences between what students view as cheating and plagiarism compared to what professors and university administration define as such (Brates et al., 2005).

Within each institution, professors and administrative staff may also have different views on the seriousness of various forms of academic dishonesty (Brates et al., 2005). Since there is no definite objective list of what specific acts constitute academic misconduct, there is much room for interpretation or the application of subjective definitions. For example, one instructor may view a student who failed to properly cite within their assignment as an act of plagiarism, while another instructor may choose not to report the same student because their interpretation of the seriousness of the act is that it is a minor infraction or an oversight (Schmelkin et al., 2008). Thus, there is much ambiguity in not only how academic dishonesty is operationally defined, but

how it is understood by students, faculty members, administrators, and researchers (Schmelkin et al., 2008).

The Challenge of Defining Academic Dishonesty

In order to better define what should and should not be considered academic dishonesty, some researchers have focused on studying the degree to which an act is considered dishonest (Carter and Elliott, 2007; Schmelkin et al., 2008). After reviewing these types of studies, Carter and Elliott (2007) stated that students considered exam-related dishonesty and plagiarism as the most serious of all dishonest acts. Conversely, acts such as collaborating outside of the classroom on homework assignments and failing to contribute during group projects were considered less serious (Carter and Elliott, 2007). Examining studies that have addressed the degree to which an act is dishonest also indicated that these acts of "less serious nature" were the behaviors that students engaged in more often (Kidwell et al., 2003 as cited in Carter and Elliott, 2007). In effect, students were more likely to help someone cheat when the act was seen as passive and less serious than actually engaging in the cheating themselves. It would appear that students rated exam-related dishonesty and plagiarism as more of an active form of dishonesty and also more serious in nature (Carter and Elliott, 2007).

Schmelkin et al. (2008) also concluded that there was much discrepancy when examining and comparing faculty and student perceptions of academic dishonesty. For example, although students found behaviours, such as getting exam questions and answers from another source before writing an exam as a form of academic misconduct, faculty viewed these kinds of acts much more seriously than students (Schmelkin et al., 2008). Faculty also believed that delaying to take an exam or submitting an assignment by providing a false excuse was a serious and obvious form of academic misconduct, whereas a majority of students did not consider these

actions are particularly serious or troublesome (Schmelkin et al., 2008). According to Schmelkin et al., the definitional problems associated with academic dishonesty were combined with these perceptual issues that served to further complicate the problem of academic misconduct (Schmelkin et al., 2008).

In general, researchers have defined academic dishonesty as engaging in one or more of the following acts: cheating; fabrication; plagiarism; and facilitating acts of a dishonest nature (Pavela, 1978 as cited in Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). For example, Bruin and Rudncik defined academic dishonesty as "the act of cheating during tests, by copying from another person or using pre-prepared notes, deliberate plagiarizing, or buying assignment papers" (2007: 153). Within the definition of academic dishonesty, there are subcategories, such as plagiarism, which can also be difficult to define and describe in its entirety. Yeo and Chien offered a relatively simple definition stating that plagiarism is "presenting the words or work of another person as one's own" (2007: 188). However, the authors noted that there was little consensus about which individual examples should and should not be considered a form of plagiarism because of the conflicting opinions among academics.

Again, the seriousness of individual examples has been examined by researchers in order to offer a more reliable definition. Walker (as cited in Yeo and Chien, 2007) suggested the following hierarchy of seriousness, "sham paraphrasing, illicit paraphrasing, other paraphrasing, and verbatim copying, recycling, ghost-writing, and purloining" (1998: 188). This definition is very broad in scope and could include the most minor to the most significant infractions. In order to provide clarity to this definition, sham paraphrasing occurs when material is copied verbatim and the source is acknowledged and represented as being paraphrased, whereas illicit paraphrasing is essentially the same act without acknowledging and divulging the source from

which the material was taken. Ghost-writing is another form of plagiarism in which a paper is written by a third party and the student puts it forth as their own original work. Other paraphrasing includes situations in which a student has copied material from another student's paper and that student is aware that their material will be copied, whereas purloining occurs when a student copies another student's paper without the student's consent or knowledge. Self-plagiarism or recycling papers occurs when a student copies from another paper of their own, perhaps from a different class. Many definitions have been put forth by various researchers; however, academics have not yet adopted an exact definition and explanation of plagiarism that is universally accepted.

Even a cursory review of the literature on academic dishonesty demonstrates that this is an area that has been explored by many academics from the fields of criminology, psychology, and sociology, and has been noted as a problem for institutions around the world (Gibson, Khey, & Schreck, 2008; Yeo and Chien, 2007). However, it is extremely difficult to compare studies because, as demonstrated by the above examples, each study defined and measured academic dishonesty differently (Vandehey, 2007). Given this, one study may report exceedingly high levels of cheating in comparison to another study simply because the researchers used a broader definition than other researchers.

In effect, various self-report survey studies have found a high rate, but a wide range, for academic dishonesty levels among students; the rate has ranged from a low of 52% to a high of approximately 90% of the student population (Vandehey, 2007; Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007; Lanier, 2006). It is important to note that this wide range may be due to various methodologies used in the research or, more likely, different or inconsistent definitions of academic dishonesty. Still, it would seem that at least half of students sampled in various

research studies reported engaging in some form of academic dishonesty. Most research studies also indicated that a large majority of students engaged in at least one form of academic dishonesty at least once during their post-secondary academic career (Vandehey, 2007). It is also evident that there is a general consensus among researchers that cheating in post-secondary institutions is rampant and on the rise (Carter and Elliott, 2007; Emleton and Helfer, 2007; Stephens et al., 2007).

The Prevalence of Academic Dishonesty

Prevalence is the most widely studied area of academic dishonesty (Schmelkin et al., 2008). The majority of the most comprehensive research on academic dishonesty among undergraduate students has been conducted by Donald McCabe and his various colleagues (McCabe and Trevino, 1996; McCabe et al., 2001; McCabe and Makowski, 2001; McCabe et al., 2002; McCabe and Trevino, 2002; McCabe, 2005; McCabe et al., 2006; Stephens et al., 2007). Important for research validity, the literature consistently demonstrates that the proportion of students who cheat is much higher in self-report studies than in formal hearings conducted by an institution's administration (Coston and Jenks, 1998). Given this, greater attention should be placed on self-report studies as this likely more closely represents the actual rate of academic dishonesty.

The first large-scale study on academic dishonesty in post-secondary institutions was conducted by Bill Bowers in 1964 (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). This study had over 5,000 participants from post-secondary institutions throughout the United States and concluded that 75% of students had engaged in at least one form of academic misconduct (McCabe et al., 2001). The prevalence of academic dishonesty occurring in North American universities was later studied by researchers at the University of Guelph who concluded that over half of

Canadian students engaged in such behaviour (Gulli, Kohler, and Patriquinet, 2007). Gulli et al. (2007) stated that there was a severe lack of urgency around the problem of academic dishonesty, even though a majority of students (53 per cent) reported engaging in serious forms of cheating on written assignments. Moreover, in the same time period, nearly three-quarters (70 per cent) of students self-reported that they participated in some form of academic dishonesty in the USA (Gulli et al., 2007).

In general, Gulli et al. (2007) concluded that this type of unethical behaviour in North American universities had been steadily increasing for years. For example, McCabe and Trevino (1996) compared self-report surveys completed by students in 1963 to that of students in 1993 and found that the proportions of those who reported engaging in at least one form of academic dishonesty increased significantly. For example, the proportion of students who admitted to copying from a fellow classmate increased from 26% to 52%; those who self-reported helping another student cheat increased from 23% to 37%; and the proportion of students who admitted to using of some type of prohibited material during an exam increased from 16% to over 25% (Gilli et al., 2007). Gulli asserted that the historical research on academic dishonesty demonstrated that the number of students engaged in several forms of academic dishonesty has been steadily rising over the last few decades. A key contributor to this increase has been the availability of the internet. For example, McCabe's research showed that 40% of US students surveyed in 2003-2004 confessed to copying whole paragraphs from the web compared to only 10% of US students when the survey was conducted in 1993-1994 (Gilli, 2007). It is clear that academic dishonesty has always existed, but it seems that the Internet and World Wide Web has made it easier to commit such offences and, therefore, increased the number of students who engage in academic dishonesty. The advent of such technology may also make academic

dishonesty more acceptable amongst students and, therefore, contribute to students being more willing to self-report their participation in these types of behaviours, thus artificially inflating comparisons with studies conducted decades earlier.

A study conducted in 1998 considered the prevalence of academic dishonesty among undergraduate criminal justice majors at a medium-sized university in the United States (Coston and Jenks, 1998). In total, 51% of the 102 students who took part in the study self-reported participating in activities that violated their university's academic integrity rules. Specifically, the overwhelming majority of students (85 per cent) reported that they were aware of fellow students having access to exams from previous years for studying and review purposes (Coston and Jenks, 1998). It was also found that nearly all students (97 per cent) were aware of others who had discussed exam questions and answers with fellow students who wrote the same exam earlier that day. The study concluded that criminal justice students were very aware of acts of academic dishonesty, that they had participated in a variety of different forms of academic dishonesty, and that they planned to continue participating in acts considered academically dishonest (Coston and Jenks, 1998). The researchers also concluded that enhancing ethical decision-making was definitely required and recommended for students (Coston and Jenks, 1998). Furthermore, they asserted that "fairness, honesty, and credibility" must be of vital importance since "justice" is an ideological principle of the criminal justice discipline (Coston and Jenks, 1998: 247).

Academic dishonesty among business students has also received a great deal of attention, primarily because of several well-published scandals committed by business elites (McCabe, Butterfield, & Trevino, 2006). After collecting data from over 5,000 business and non-business graduate students from various colleges in the United States and Canada, McCabe et al. (2006)

concluded that cheating was significantly higher among the business graduates. Although students' self-reported cheating was high in both groups, 56% of graduate business students admitted to participating in some form of academic dishonesty compared to 47% of non-business graduates (McCabe et al., 2006). Given these results, it would appear that academic misconduct is a serious issue among graduate students generally.

The academic dishonesty literature is filled with prevalence studies that conclude that academic dishonesty is an issue for all disciplines of study within all universities. It is also evident that academic dishonesty requires an academically accepted definition because it is currently a phenomenon that has various subjective definitions. Researchers are reporting alarming findings in terms of how much of this deviant behaviour occurs and how often it occurs. This chapter has provided the framework required to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and how often it occurs. The next chapter will further examine what factors are linked to academic dishonesty and why it continues to plague universities.

Chapter 2: Factors that Effect Academic Dishonesty

There is a growing body of research that links participating in academic dishonesty to several variables, such as gender, the major one is registered in, grade point average (GPA), the probability of being caught and punished, peer cheating, a student's perception of their institution's academic integrity policy and the social acceptance of it, perceived pressure or the complete absence of an academic honour code, and situational characteristics (McCabe et al., 2002; Carter and Elliott, 2007). It is important to identify and understand the nature and extent of these relationships because many of them can be altered by the institution's commitment to academic integrity (McCabe et al., 2002).

McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2002) found that academic misconduct was the most prevalent at universities that did not have honour codes. While the notion of honour codes will be discussed in greater detail below, university honour codes establish and clearly outline in writing what the institution defines as academic dishonesty and what the institutional response will be for such deviance (Vandehey, 2007). McCabe and associates' (2002) study also found that academic dishonesty was negatively correlated with perceived certainty of being caught, an understanding of the university's policies, and the perceived severity of punishment (McCabe et al., 2002). In effect, it was concluded that specific deterrence functioned to reduce academic dishonesty.[1] The study also concluded that there was a positive association between academic dishonesty and perceptions of dishonest peer behaviour. In fact, this was noted as the strongest

[1] Specific deterrence suggests that deviant acts are avoided by rational thinking individuals when they conclude that the costs of engaging in an act of deviance are outweighed by the costs of engaging in that act. According to this perspective, the elements that are considered in this calculation are the chances of being caught, the severity of the punishment, and the swiftness of the punishment in relation to when the act was committed. Simply put, the more convinced an individual is that they will be caught, dealt with quickly, and punished severely, the less likely they are to engage in a deviant act.

influence on whether a student engaged in academic dishonesty. This finding suggests that universities should focus their attention toward creating student role models of good behaviour and a campus culture that encourages students to keep their honour and ethics intact (McCabe et al., 2002).

With respect to gender differences, a number of studies have concluded that male students were more likely to commit academic dishonesty than female students (Brown and Emmett 2001; McCabe and Trevino, 1997; Michaels and Miethe 1989; Whitley, Nelson, & Jones 1999 as cited in Lanier, 2006). Many studies have concentrated on the ratio differences of cheating between males and females and discovered that males were more likely to engage in this type of delinquent behaviour; however, these studies did not offer any information about possible causes for this disparity (Gibson et al., 2008). Although the individual factor of gender has received much attention, there is scepticism about whether it plays a role in decisions to engage in academic dishonesty because other studies have reported no significant differences by gender (Baird, 1980; Haines et al., 1986 as cited in McCabe et al., 2001). McCabe and his colleagues performed extensive studies on academic dishonesty and concluded that, although there was conflicting evidence, when students were examined within similar majors of education, there were very small gender differences (McCabe et al., 2001).

It is no surprise that procrastinating and poor time management increased the likelihood of a student committing some form of academic dishonesty (Pino and Smith, 2005). In these situations, students must make up for the time wasted and, therefore, may feel compelled to engage in academic dishonesty as means to complete assignments. Given that students who have higher academic abilities are also less likely to procrastinate on assignments, they are less likely to engage in academic dishonesty (Pino and Smith, 2005). Mixon's (1996, as cited in Bisping et

al., 2008) research found that the propensity to engage in academic dishonesty decreased with the student's GPA and increased if the student perceived that academic dishonesty was prevalent among their peer groups. McCabe et al. (2001) supported the conclusion that students with lower GPAs were more likely to self-report cheating than those with higher GPAs. They determined that students who participated in university athletic programs or various extracurricular activities tended to self-report more cheating because these types of commitments involved large demands on their time and, therefore, put additional pressure on the student to not only time-manage, but to also remain competitive with their peers (McCabe et al., 2001).

A 2003 study stated that there were three main categories of factors that influenced students' decisions to engage in dishonest academic acts (NG et al., 2003). One category was internal factors that consisted of learning inertia, poor study habits, individual nature, ethnicity, fear of failure, poor confidence, and personal stress (NG et al., 2003). Secondly, there were social pressures that included the need for a student to acquire social acceptance, to find a place within a peer group, and to maintain not only their competitiveness, but also their self-esteem (NG et al., 2003). Lastly, there were external factors created by the university and its environment. For example, the university's system of addressing academic dishonesty, the unclear definition of what academic dishonesty constituted, unclear punishments, and the severe lack of support for students to gain an understanding of how to study and properly cite so that they could successfully maintain their academic integrity were contributors to academic dishonesty (NG et al., 2003).

Unfortunately, the media attention that well televised scandals receive may potentially have a negative effect on what students perceive is required to succeed outside of academia. The information provided by the media contributes to a general attitude that provides values

conducive to engaging in academic dishonesty as the media reports on stories about ethical transgressions made by our leaders in government, business, sports, and academia (McCabe and Trevino, 2002). Well-televised and sensationalized scandals within companies, such as Enron, WorldCom, Adelphia, and Toyota, have drawn a substantial amount of public attention to the issue of how some powerful leaders conducted their business in unethical ways (Carter and Elliott, 2007). One possible outcome from these types of media stories is that some students may believe that unethical behaviour is simply the way the world works.

Perhaps this general worldview may help explain why a factor such as which field of study a student undertakes can play a role in the likelihood of engaging in academic dishonesty. For example, as mentioned above, several studies have demonstrated that business students engaged in academic dishonesty more often than students from other academic disciplines (Harris, 1989; Eastman et al., 2008). Other researchers have stated that this should be a critical issue for business schools since what students learn is acceptable within their institution is what they deem acceptable in the business community (Eastman et al., 2008).

The blatant display of unethical behaviour by some world elites has also brought attention to the institutions that educated these individuals. Although academic dishonesty is an issue within all disciplines of study, business schools have received the most media attention and scrutiny. Researchers are asking what role educational institutions play or should play in developing the influential elite of tomorrow (Carter and Elliot, 2007). Carter and Elliott concluded their study of academic dishonesty of business students by stating that "faculty and academic institutions have a responsibility to nurture the ethical development of students who will soon be entering the world of work" (2007: 471). The expectation is that post secondary

institutions should do a better job of governing academic dishonesty so that students learn and understand the importance of ethical integrity before entering the work force.

Why do Students Commit Academic Dishonesty?

Academic dishonesty is a growing problem because students choose, for one reason or another, to engage in this behaviour. Given this, academic dishonesty cannot be fully understood or addressed unless researchers explore and identify the reasons why students engage in it. In past years, several studies have examined what factors led students to cheat (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008; McCabe, 2005; Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002; Wowra, 2007; Stephen et al., 2007; Desruisseaux, 1999; Lovette-Hooper et al., 2007). Leonard and LeBrasseur (2008) concluded that since little was done against those who engaged in academic dishonesty, students felt more pressure to cheat in order to remain competitive and maintain a level playing field (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008; McCabe, 2005). Accordingly, students who may have honestly completed their work chose to engage in academically dishonest behaviour because they observed how easily so many students cheated and never got caught, and because they felt it was the only way to remain competitive (McCabe et al., 2001). Thus, as students recognized the consequences of being disadvantaged by their cheating counterparts, they were more likely to engage in some form of cheating.

Other reasons students provided for engaging in academic dishonesty included external pressures, unfair professors, and a general lack of time to complete assignments (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). University students have also justified their unethical actions through sound reasoning. In other words, students essentially set aside their own personal sense of responsibility and shifted the blame to other circumstances and/or people (Whitley and Keith-

Spiegel, 2002). Some students justified their actions by simply denying the unethical nature of their actions. For example, students rationalized that plagiarizing an assignment could not be defined as unethical because the instructor did not allow adequate time for students to complete the assignment. In another example, learners may decide that the assignment was not going to provide any useful skills for the future and, therefore, sought dishonest methods of completing it, rather than expending the energy required because the assignment itself was viewed as a waste of time and effort (Wowra, 2007).

As can be expected, for some students, simply attaining the desired degree becomes the highest priority. This attitude can lead some students to forget what they are compromising in the process of engaging in academically dishonest behaviour. It is critical for universities to emphasize the importance of students maintaining the highest standards and adhering to academic integrity policies (Stephen et al., 2007). However, this can be extremely difficult because it is also evident that students will neutralize this obligation through an assortment of "mechanisms or techniques, such as minimizing consequences, euphemistic labeling, displacing responsibility, and diffusing responsibility" (Stephen et al., 2007: 163). These are only a few of the tactics that individuals may use to completely avoid or reduce the self-recrimination associated with committing criminal or immoral acts (Bandura, 1986 as cited in Stephen et al., 2007).

In other situations, students do not feel the need to reduce these feelings because they do not believe that they have committed any type of wrongdoing. Universities are an extremely competitive environment and researchers who have studied the attitude of university students have found that there is a belief that integrity compromising behaviour is a necessary and appropriate component of the school environment (Wowra, 2007). Students will not consider

cheating on an exam as being unethical if they believe all students cheat and that they must do so to remain academically competitive (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Wowra concluded that university students viewed academic dishonesty as a "functional way to operate in the world" (2007: 213). The motivation to complete school for a desired degree can often be more important in a student's mind than completing the work and being a legitimately educated and ethical citizen (Lovette-Hooper et al., 2007). Many students are desperate to qualify for graduate programs or attain the required credentials for the workplace (Desruisseaux, 1999). With leading law, business, and medical schools admitting only a select few high achieving applicants, there is a growing amount of pressure on students to perform consistently at the highest level (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). Brown (2002) also found that it was the norm for university students to consider cheating as the "American way". It seems that many students believed that academic dishonesty was not a form of delinquency, but rather an "academic skill almost as important as being able to read and write" (Brown, 2002: 9).

It is important to note that there is also a portion of academic dishonesty that is truly unintentional. In some cases, students are unaware that their behaviours constitute academic misconduct (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002; Stephen, 1994). For example, a student may seek the assistance of a fellow classmate on an assignment intended to be completed individually. Since many programs actually encourage students to work together and brainstorm ideas for various projects, it can be confusing for students to differentiate between suitable and unsuitable collaboration (Stephen, 1994). In other cases, students may be aware that certain behaviours are prohibited, but they lack the skills or knowledge to avoid the behaviour. This can occur when students do not fully understand how to properly cite a paper, thus unknowingly commit plagiarism (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). This mistake is even more common among

international students who may not be accustomed to another university's standards of referencing.

Research has also focused on the reporting of academic dishonesty to explain why students cheat. As mentioned above, many students have reported that professors and administrators did not address academic dishonesty, thus creating a situation where students felt that they had to cheat in order to compete (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008; McCabe, 2005). Alschuler and Gregory (1995) argued that there were disincentives for faculty members to report offences because of the exhaustive effort required to attain proof of the offense and formally report students. The matter of collecting evidence, gathering witness reports, and having to attend meetings related to the incident result in a lot of work for professors who may have other teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008). There are also emotional consequences to professors and administrators, such as fear and stress, which can contribute to why some fail to report academic misconduct (Vandehey, 2007). Professors and administrators may also believe that there is a general lack of administrative support, or that they will become involved in a long bureaucratic reporting/appeal process, and possibly even litigation (Vandehey, 2007; Burke, Polimeni, & Slavin, 2007; McCabe et al., 2001).

Given this, many faculty members will ignore cheating in order to avoid the potentially stressful and exhaustive institution reporting procedures (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008). When addressing an incident of academic misconduct, Carter and Elliott (2007) noted a study (Nuss, 1984, as cited in Carter and Elliott, 2007) that found that 39% of faculty members would report an offence, 34% would simply lower the assignment grade, and 26% would provide the student with a reprimanding warning. It is evident that faculty members often avoid formally charging

students which can contribute to students feeling that either they should engage in academic dishonesty or that this is not a serious have no choice but to engage in academic misconduct.

It is clear that students provide a variety of reasons for their engagement in academic dishonesty. Many of these reasons, such as lack of reporting by faculty, lack of consequences from the institution, and the lack of knowledge on the part of students, are all causes that can be addressed by universities. Factors, such as peer cheating, students' perception of academic integrity policy, the social acceptance of academic dishonesty, perceived pressure of an academic honour code, and situational characteristics, are also factors that universities have a large degree of control over. Therefore, these factors should not only be further researched, but also directly and specifically addressed by post secondary institutions. Some recommendations for doing this will be provided below. However, one of the most significant, and difficult to control, factors effecting academic dishonesty is technology. This issue is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 3: The Role of Technology in Academic Dishonesty

Revolutionary changes in technology have served to further the problem of academic dishonesty (Simon et al., 2004; Carter and Elliot, 2007; Eastman, Eastman, & Iyer, 2008). The World Wide Web and Internet have allowed students to easily share and obtain information (Carter and Elliot, 2007). This claim is supported by the positive correlation between academic dishonesty and the increased use of technology in post secondary institutions (Harper, 2006). The Center for Academic Integrity concluded that the number of college students who have utilized "cutting and pasting" to incorporate unattributed pieces of text into their papers increased from 10% to 40% over the course of five years (Etter, Cramer, & Seth, 2006). Students can easily use internet search engines, such as Google or Bing, to find hundreds of websites that provide academic papers for nominal fees (Descuisseaux, 1995). The ability to locate and retrieve previously written academic papers at the touch of a couple keystrokes makes these highly lucrative options a very large problem for academic institutions. Students can also participate in online discussion forums where they may ask proficient learners or experts particular questions and than simply incorporate these responses into their assignment without acknowledging the received assistance or source of assistance (Akbulut et al., 2007).

The challenge is that various digital technologies, such as the internet and personal digital assistants (PDAs), are wonderful innovative tools that have played a major role in advancing communication and education (Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007). The Internet is an especially powerful tool as it provides the entire sum of human knowledge in an extremely accessible form (Storm and Storm, 2207). The sheer volume of information available is unlike that in any other time in human history. However, it becomes problematic when students do not

receive the vital training required to ensure the development of appropriate ethical behaviour while being online. Detecting and monitoring student behaviour becomes even more difficult with online courses where there is very little or no personal interaction between the student and professor (Stephens et al., 2007). Elementary and Secondary schools often go to great lengths to ensure that all students have access to and the ability to use the internet (Storm and Strom, 2007). This is certainly important; however, Storm and Storm (2007) asserted that this online enthusiasm is not always combined with the necessary training to ensure that students also understand the importance of ethics while being online. Unfortunately, it is routine for young adults to illegally download material without consideration of the ethical and legal consequences of this behaviour. In fact, it could be argued that this behaviour is generally accepted as normative among students. This lack of education, awareness, and training in online searching and downloading can result in a substantial proportion of students not exercising good ethical behaviour while online. Storm and Storm (2007) stated that universities must develop policy initiatives that require them to accept responsibility for educating students about how to be ethical in an internet society.

Technological advancements have led many scholars to suggest ways to address technologies effect on academic dishonesty. For example, Michelle Conlin (2007) has suggested that in a "wired world" it may be necessary to think about changing what we consider "cheating" to "postmodern learning". Conlin stated that the current generation has grown up watching illegally downloaded movies and listening to downloaded music and, as a result, may have a very different view of sharing material than students of previous generations. Complicating this issue, students often receive mixed messages from educational institutions and employment corporations. For example, universities emphasize teamwork, even though students are graded

and ranked individually. When students graduate and enter the interdependent world, they are again asked to make an adjustment because their success essentially depends on their ability to creatively collaborate with others, while promotions and professional successes are more commonly individually based.

To adjust to this reality, the Stanford University Design School has embraced the idea of an adaptive thinking style by making their programs highly collaborative (Conlin, 2007). In part, they did this to address the academic dishonesty that occurs due to information sharing between their students. Professor Sutton stated that "it would be impossible to cheat" and "if you found somebody to help you write an exam, in our view, that's a sign of an inventive person who gets stuff done" (Conlin, 2007: 42). He asks the question: "one group of students got the police to help them with a school project to build a roundabout where there were a lot of bicycle accidents. Is that cheating?" (Conlin, 2007: 42). While certainly an extreme example, it exemplifies how one school has chosen to adapt to a student body that is constantly online and thinks very differently about the distinction between collaboration and academic dishonesty.

For Conlin, universities need to accept that certain types of technologies have transformed academic dishonesty into a "normal social fact" of the post secondary environment (Garland, 1996: 446). Academic dishonesty is not going to completely disappear and, for most people, it is not an unexpected, abnormal event. Professors, students, and university administration realize that this type of behaviour occurs in post secondary institutions. The view of Conlin and others is that instead of attempting to eliminate it altogether, some forms of academic dishonesty should simply be accepted as a new form of learning. In essence, universities would "define deviance down" by lessening the degree to which academic dishonesty offences are condemned and punished (Garland, 1996: 456). For example, in this

context, behaviours, such as students working together to complete a take-home exam would not be viewed as inappropriate collaboration constituting academic dishonesty. Still, this "defining deviance down" adaptation would have to be carefully performed in order to ensure that it is balanced with maintaining the integrity of academia (Garland, 1996).

Conlin did not take the position that educational institutions no longer needed to deal with ethical rule breaking. Instead, she suggested that with so much information sharing going on, there may be a need for a change in the definition of academic dishonesty (Conlin, 2007). Perhaps working with other students on take-home exams should not be considered a form of cheating, but rather a form of "postmodern learning" in a society that thrives on information sharing (Conlin, 2007). This suggestion demonstrates the influence of technologies, like the internet and World Wide Web, on students and academia. It further suggests how accepting certain types of behaviour currently defined as unethical may be a necessary part of addressing the issue and adapting to the ways in which students and professionals conduct their behaviour. In effect, normalizing academic dishonesty acts that involve information sharing as the key unethical component may require a perception change. Considering how much has changed because of new technologies, universities may decide to and/or need to adopt this type of adaptive strategy.

In addition to the internet, electronic devices, such as cell phones, iPods, calculators, and PDAs have also increased the amount of cheating in universities by allowing students to more easily access and conceal material prohibited during exams (Burke, Polimeni, & Slavin, 2007; Stephens et al., 2007). For example, a student may save formulas for a math exam, terms for a biology exam, or dates for a history exam on their calculator or iPod and access this information clandestinely during the exam. Cell phones are also problematic because they give students the

ability to text answers to one another, look for answers on the internet by using their wireless services, and take pictures of exams for those who are writing at later times (Burke et al., 2007). These acts of academic dishonesty can be especially difficult for instructors to detect and provide proof of in order to charge the student with misconduct (Embleton and Helfer, 2007). If students are allowed calculators during an exam, it is difficult to monitor what extra information is stored on them. As mentioned above, cell phones can be problematic as they are also readily concealed and can easily be used for cheating without detection.

It is important to note that universities may obtain the added support of the government, with respect to internet plagiarism, as cases could involve the criminal justice system. For example, cyber law proposals that serve to define offenses and the penalties warranted are beginning to emerge as government agenda items (Strom and Strom, 2007). Therefore, it is possible that instances of academic misconduct become cases dealt with in the courts, rather than the academic environment. If such a change is to occur, it would aid universities in further emphasizing to their students the importance of being responsible and ethical while being online and the seriousness of committing violations of academic standard codes.

Technology has certainly played a significant role in furthering academic dishonesty, and academic institutions must design processes to prevent and respond to the emerging role of technology in academic dishonesty. As discussed, many scholars have studied the contribution of technology to academic dishonesty and offered solutions to deal with the growing challenges posed by tools like the internet and the World Wide Web. In effect, addressing technological advances will aid in counteracting the phenomenon of academic dishonesty. Through research and understanding, changes can be implemented to better address academic dishonesty so fewer students feel that this is either an acceptable or required behaviour. Academic dishonesty will

persist within academic institutions unless serious and systematic efforts are made to understand it, explain it to students and faculty, and develop strategies to control it.

Chapter 4: Why Should Academic Dishonesty be of Concern to Academic Institutions?

Post secondary institutions are expected to aid in the development of responsible and ethical students who understand the importance of academic integrity and respecting the work of fellow scholars (Gulli et al., 2007). The degrees that universities award provide the notice that the student has completed the number of required credits, and that the student has been tested and considered suitable by the appropriate authorities for attaining that degree (Gulli et al., 2007). However, the value of any degree is completely debased if it is achieved by academically dishonest means. Universities have a responsibility to emphasize the importance of ethics, morals, and responsibility (Gulli et al., 2007).

As mentioned above, one of the long-term consequences of adopting academically dishonest values in school is that it may lead to unethical behaviour in the student's future line of work (Granitz and Loewy, 2007; Wowra, 2007). It is logical to question if participation in one form of deviance, such as cheating, has the potential to lead to participation in other forms of deviance in other areas, such as stealing from the workplace (Harding et al., 2004). Many scholars have found that there is a correlation between academic dishonesty and other forms of deviant behaviour, such as cheating on income taxes or shoplifting (Trevor et al., 2004). Such findings suggest that there may be some common factors that lead individuals to commit a wide range of deviant behaviours (Trevor et al., 2004).

It is also important to consider that the skills and knowledge that a student develops in their post-secondary years are part of the foundation that they carry into their professional lives (Austin, Simpson, & Reynen, 2005). Researchers have argued that the moral values of a profession are initially shown, practiced, and internalized by a student during their formal

schooling (Austin, Simpson, & Reynen, 2005). Many studies have suggested that engaging in academic dishonesty could predict of future unethical behaviours (Austin et al., 2005). A 2004 exploratory study conducted by Harding et al. examined the relationship between academic dishonesty in high school and college, and unethical behaviour while employed among a sample of engineering students. The study found that there appeared to be a strong relationship between participants who self-reported engaging in academic dishonesty while a student and participating in dishonest behaviour in the workplace (Trevor et al., 2004). In effect, cheating during post secondary education predicted future unethical behaviour in the workplace.

Unfortunately, universities function in an environment in which custom-ordered graduate dissertations can be purchased online (Embleton and Helfer, 2007). One of the consequences of this is that future professionals, administrators, and professors may hold undergraduate and graduate degrees that were obtained through academically dishonest means (Embleton and Helfer, 2007). In addition to the challenges associated with people obtaining tenure or important jobs without the required skills or knowledge, these people may also be teaching and/or training the next generation of leaders or scholars. Of concern, there may be a transfer of values that does not include the importance of achieving academic success through responsible and ethical means.

Educational institutions produce "the doctors who will heal us, the engineers who will build our bridges and the CEO's who will generate our wealth" (Gulli et al., 2007: 32). The persistence of dishonest behaviour is problematic when considering the importance of many occupations and the likelihood that some of these positions will be filled by students who engaged in unethical practices while obtaining their degrees or credentials (Carter and Elliott, 2007). For example, taking shortcuts and rule breaking as an engineer or a medical surgeon

could have life threatening outcomes (Wowra, 2007). A 2005 New England Journal of Medicine article suggested that doctors who were disciplined by their state medical boards were three times more likely to have engaged in some form of unprofessional conduct while attending medical school (Gulli et al., 2007). A 2001 study published by the Journal of Education for Business studied the attitudes of business students and concluded that those who participated in academically dishonest behaviour in their post secondary careers were more likely to continue committing dishonest behaviour in their professional lives (Gulli et al., 2007).

In the fields of criminology and criminal justice, principles of fairness and justice are key principles and, given the issues and consequences for people when dealing with agents of criminal justice, fairness, truthfulness, and trustworthiness are of critical importance (Coston and Jenks, 1998). Thus, it is imperative that students receive moral and ethical decision making skills while in the post secondary setting. Coston and Jenks (1998) emphasized that criminal justice students hold the highest standard of ethical behaviour because they will become our future agents of criminal justice, policy makers, practitioners, researchers, and academics. The underlying thought is that understanding and enhancing the honesty and fairness of these students will aid researchers to better understand and enhance ethical decision making within the field of criminal justice.

Researchers have also found that deceitful and dishonest attitudes associated with academic dishonesty often find their way into other areas life (Blankenship and Whitley, 2000 as cited in Lovett-Hooper et al., 2007). Students who engaged in academically dishonest acts self-reported that they could see themselves participating in “illegal, risky, and rule-violating behaviours, such as getting a speeding ticket, cheating on a spouse/romantic partner, being arrested for drinking and driving, or calling in sick to work (Blankenship and Whitley, 2000 as

cited in Lovett-Hooper et al., 2007: 332). Although the study did not conclude that academic dishonesty was causally related to such acts, there was a connection between academic misconduct and future misconduct. The study's correlational analysis indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between students who committed academic dishonesty and those who saw themselves engaging in norm/rule violating behaviour in the future (Lovett-Hooper et al., 2007). The regression analyses also indicated that it was possible to expect those who violated ethical rules in college to do so in other areas of their lives in the future (Lovett-Hooper et al., 2007).

Academic dishonesty is a growing epidemic in North American universities (Alschuler and Blimiling, 1995; Desruisseaux, 1999; Embleton and Helfer, 2007; Etter, Cramer, & Seth, 2007). Institutions cannot simply ignore this problem because it will have a detrimental effect on the reputation and nature of academia (Simon et al., 2004). Ethics and a high level of respect for a fellow scholar's work are essential components of the academia. Given this, its credibility and value are jeopardized if unethical or dishonest behaviour persists (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). It is also disturbing to consider what the possibilities could be if unethical students produce unethical society member and/or professionals. As mentioned above, some scholars have suggested that there is a link between those who behave unethically in school and those who behave unethically in the work place (Granitz and Loewy, 2007; Wowra, 2007). The ramifications of ignoring or not adequately addressing academic dishonesty in universities and colleges could be serious for society. Post secondary institutions help educate and mould the future elites and, therefore, it is very important for researchers to examine if and how these institutions address academic dishonesty. This issue will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 5: How Universities Address Academic Dishonesty

Universities must ensure that their campus community members behave appropriately; therefore, they establish policies and guidelines. Within these rules, universities stipulate that academic dishonesty is a prohibited and punishable behaviour. Most Canadian universities have the expectation that students are not only to know their university's policy regarding various forms of misconduct, but that they also know that they will be held accountable for any violations. Students are to act responsibly and equip themselves with the information and tools required to maintain their academic integrity.

A majority of North American universities currently address academic dishonesty through policies that focus on detection and punishment to deter students from engaging in such behaviour (Gulli, Kohler, & Patriquin, 2007). However, faculty members do not always follow the procedures for reporting which result in a large proportion of incidents not being addressed at all. While detection and punishment is important, some researchers have argued that this approach does not address the root causes of the problem with the intention that fewer offences occur (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). In effect, institutions are reacting to the problem, rather than attempting to prevent the problem (Granitz and Loewy, 2006).

Considering the quantity of incidents and the rising general trend, it seems that the current approach is inadequate and substandard in counteracting academic dishonesty. Some post secondary institutions have attempted to combat unethical behaviour by increasing the severity of punishment (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). These initiatives are focused on sending a clear message to students who may contemplate engaging in academic dishonesty. The intention of this approach is that fewer students will choose to violate the rules if they are aware of and fear

the severe ramifications. This is coupled with the notion that imposing harsh punishments on one student will also deter other students from personally engaging in dishonest acts (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). The underlying perception is that students who see their fellow students facing harsh penalties will be deterred. Although this approach may seem promising, researchers have found that the severity of punishment is not related to a student's decision to engage in cheating, and that it does not affect academic dishonesty recidivism rates (Gulli, Kohler, & Patriquin, 2007).

Some authors have talked about a "war against academic dishonesty" approach similar to the "war on drugs" approach in which there are no limitations (Garland, 1996: 448). In this approach, success is achieved when universities no longer have students who commit academic dishonesty. However, it seems unlikely that there will be a time in the foreseeable future in which no students engage in academic dishonesty. Still, declining statistics could be used as a benchmark for how universities are doing in preventing and responding to instances of academic misconduct. For example, it may be beneficial to look at how many students re-offend after having to complete a university's academic integrity workshop. Another approach might be to devise a classification system that would categorize the various types of academic dishonesty by severity and concentrate on decreasing the most serious types. Perhaps it is overzealous and unrealistic to strive for the complete eradication of all forms of academic dishonesty and strive, for example, for an environment that has virtually no students purchasing papers. It may also be appropriate to discuss and evaluate how many students have formed a strong bond to their university and their own ethics in order to see if there has been progress.

Academic dishonesty is certainly an issue that North American universities are aware of and attempting to address. It is apparent that a majority of institutions have adopted a reactive

style of dealing with these types of infractions. There will always be a need for evaluation and improvement to ensure that the best approach is implemented. There is no guarantee that academic dishonesty will be eradicated, but there is vast potential for better controlling it and addressing it. The next chapter will discuss alternative policy recommendations that are worth consideration as they may be advantageous in trying to prevent academic dishonesty.

Chapter 6: Policy Recommendations for Proactively Addressing Academic Dishonesty

Instructors will always have a proportion of students who engage in academic misconduct and educational institutions will always require means to detect those who engage in these behaviours. Given this, it is important to discuss various strategies that staff and faculty members can use to detect various forms of academic dishonesty. While the continuous advancements in technology have done great things for learning and assessment, it is vital that these technologies be applied and utilized in a responsible and ethical manner (Storm and Strom, 2007). Moreover, technology can also often be used to address various forms of technology assisted academic dishonesty. For example, there are some very useful plagiarism recognition software products (Chiesl, 2007). To use these products, faculty members simply ask their students to submit electronic versions of their assignment so that they can be submitted to databases, such as turnitin.com. The software compares the student's work with "web pages, past student papers, newsworthy articles, and academic publications" (Chiesl, 2007: 206). This allows the professor to quickly determine if any portion of a student's paper has been cut and pasted from another source without proper references. Informing students that this type of software will be used to check all assignments can also serve to deter students from plagiarism.

Another technique is for an instructor to insert a few particularly unique or suspicious sounding sentences or phrases from a student's assignment directly into a search engine, such as Google or Bing (McLafferty and Foust, 2004 as cited in Eastman et al., 2008). Universities may also choose to purchase software that allows professors to check their students' assignment against others that have been submitted within the institution. The software compares and looks for identical wording within the database of assignments submitted by all professors within the

institution to determine if any portion of the assignment has been submitted in a prior assignment for a different course (McLafferty and Foust, 2004 as cited in Eastman et al., 2008).

Unfortunately, even these tools are inadequate for exposing all forms of plagiarism, particularly those websites that offer custom papers that are original work (Embleton and Kimberly, 2007). In other words, a paper may be original work, but still constitute plagiarism if the student is not the author. In order to respond to this form of plagiarism, instructors may choose to ask that students submit any physical references they printed from online sources and any draft work they completed prior to the final copy. Requesting these types of documents ensures that the student can produce the work that resulted in the final construction of their paper (Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007; Embleton and Kimberly, 2007).

In situations where the student submits an assignment that is not accompanied by such documents or if the documentation is attached, but the instructor remains sceptical about the authenticity of the work, a discussion with the student may reveal an incident of academic misconduct. A student who has plagiarized a paper may have difficulty discussing the paper at length or in depth. Comparing the written style of a paper with the style that the student uses during exam settings may also be helpful when trying to confirm a suspicion of plagiarism.

In terms of exams, small changes during exams can be very helpful in deterring students from cheating and detecting those who do. For example, asking students to remove their caps, assigning a random seating arrangement, and having a number of proctors can be extremely helpful in deterring cheating (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). Proctors can also accompany students to the washroom in order to prevent them from reviewing materials or engaging in inappropriate conversations about the exam or using technology, such as cell phones, to share exam information.

Another suggestion is to ask students to show their student ID when submitting their exam (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). In classes with large numbers of students, this small change can greatly aid in identifying individuals who are writing exams for other people. When possible, an exam with essay questions, rather than multiple choices, is a great preventative measure. However, if the exam must be multiple-choice it is helpful to have several versions of the exam (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). Having different coloured copies of an exam can immediately send out the message that there are several different versions and, therefore, deter students from cheating.

Stephens, Young, and Calabrese (2007) stated the importance of assigning original and interesting coursework in order to decrease the probability of students engaging in plagiarism. Even more helpful is the inclusion of several steps within the assignment so that students must submit various mini-assignments eventually leading to the completion of the entire assignment (Stephens et al., 2007). For example, a written assignment could include submitting a written brainstorming session the first week, an outline the next week, a draft the following week, and so on in order to prevent procrastination, which may lead to plagiarizing, or to reduce the ability to either buy a paper or have someone else write the paper for the student.

Researchers commonly suggest that instructors should attempt to avoid standardized general class assignments that could be recycled from term to term (Brown, 2002). If this is not possible, inform the students that past assignments are kept on file and all assignments will be run through a plagiarism detection database.

The majority of North American universities currently have a reactive style of addressing academic dishonesty through policies that focus on detection and punishment (Gulli, Kohler, & Patriquin, 2007). Many post secondary institutions have concentrated on increasing techniques of

detection and punishment measures with the hope that faculty members will be able to deter students in the first instance (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). However, as discussed above, generally, faculty members do not follow the procedures for reporting academic dishonesty. Therefore, increasing the levels of detection and punishment will not have a significant effect.

While detection and punishment is important, it does not recognize or attempt to address the root causes of the problem (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). Institutions tend to focus on reacting to the problem in the best way possible, rather than attempting to eliminate the problem so that there are fewer incidents that must be dealt with (Granitz and Loewy, 2006). Stephens, Young, and Calabrese (2007) asserted that catching students after they have made a preventable misstep is not the optimal solution. Instead, the need is to help students act ethically, rather than punishing them after they have wilfully engaged in academic dishonesty (Stephens et al., 2007). Those who promote the idea of a positive approach in which institutions take on the responsibility to better teach students about plagiarism and cheating agree that increasing the cost of delinquency will not deter most students (Simon et al., 2004). Instead, it is much more conducive to better educate students so that they understand that cheating and plagiarism are threats to effective learning and personal development (Simon et al., 2004).

It is also important to recognize that in a high-tech world, students are constantly being offered better solutions to combat the strategies used to detect cheating and plagiarism. Also, many institutions have out-dated policies that do not even mention technology-aided offences (Gulli et al., 2007). Simply addressing offences if and when they are reported is not sufficient because it does not foster an environment in which students understand the importance of academic integrity and respecting the work of others (Gulli et al., 2007). Universities have a critical role to play in creating an environment that emphasizes the importance of ethics, morals,

and responsibility, and should not continue to combat academic dishonesty with out-dated or reactive style policies that do not address the larger, underlying root causes of the behaviour.

Educational institutions must make every effort to maintain the "commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, respect, trust, fairness and responsibility" (Coalter, Lim, & Wanorie, 2007: 3). In order to do so, a policy shift from the reactive to a proactive and preventative focus, where all university staff, faculty, and administrators are on board, must be made so that they can successfully focus their attention toward educating and informing students (McCabe, 2005; McCabe et al., 2002; Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). Universities must create a "campus culture that truly values academic integrity" and emphasizes the importance of moral development (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995: 3). This necessary shift in focus requires an enormous amount of skill and knowledge building about academic dishonesty with staff, faculty, and students.

Universities must do more to foster students' understanding and appreciation of the major academic and moral values that are so important in academia and life (Stephen et al., 2007). As emphasized by Stephens, Young, and Calabrese (2007), students who are honed to act fairly, honestly, and responsibly would greatly aid in the prevention of moral judgment errors. It is a challenging, but worthwhile undertaking, and there are several recommendations to aid institutions in their quest to produce ethically aware and rule abiding graduates (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). The ultimate objective is to develop a campus culture that not only considers academic dishonesty socially unacceptable, but also takes pride in maintaining their academic integrity.

Honour Codes

An honour code is usually an understanding or contract between the student and the institution indicating that the student understands and will adhere to the academic integrity rules and regulations set out by the institution. It is essential for all universities to develop and establish an honour code because those who have not done so typically experience significantly more breaches of academic misconduct on their campus (Granitz and Loewy, 2007; McCabe and Makowski, 2001; McCabe and Trevino, 2002). For example, McCabe and Trevino (2001) found that on campuses without honour codes, one in five students self-reported cheating more than three times during their post secondary career. This number significantly decreased to one in 16 students on campuses that had established honour codes. McCabe and Trevino (2001) also suggested that establishing an honour code emphasized that dishonesty was socially undesirable on campus that may be helpful in creating a bond between the school's ethical standards and the students' responsibility to uphold those standards.

Generally, when learners enter post secondary institutions that have established honour codes, they witness less academic dishonesty than on campuses without honour codes (McCabe et al., 2001; McCabe and Makowski, 2001). Thus, on campuses with honour codes, students internalize this ethic and are more likely to abide by the rules of their new community. The hope is that, although students may eventually decide to commit a form of cheating, for the majority, after they have been exposed to the community ethic and realize how cheating is in violation of the trust placed in them, they are more likely to choose to behave ethically (McCabe et al., 2001). The great influence of honour codes likely comes from the students' desire to belong to the community. McCabe et al. (2001) placed great emphasis on establishing an honour code because they viewed it as fundamental to any university addressing the problem of academic

misconduct. The researchers affirmed that universities who chose not to discuss and create a dialogue between students and the institution about academic dishonesty continued to experience persistent levels of academic dishonesty.

Valuing Integrity

Another key element that should be created is an academic integrity policy that affirms that all members of the university are part of an institution that "values academic integrity and condemns academic dishonesty" (Whitely and Keith-Spiegel, 2002: 130). Whitely and Keith-Spiegel (2002) asserted that this may seem like a declaration that does not need to be stated; however, it is important to explicitly affirm since people are more likely to abide by rules if they understand the reasons for those rules. The policy should also include all prohibited behaviours because the more defined the behaviours are, the easier it is for individuals to avoid them (Whitely and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Specific procedures for informal and formal resolution of suspected incidents of academic dishonesty should also be described. For example, the exact procedures to follow when an instructor suspects an instance of plagiarism should be clearly outlined. Other detailed information should include what type of notification the student will receive and what action will be taken if the student admits or denies an allegation (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Clearly defined penalties for the types of misconduct should also be communicated within the document (Vandehey, 2007). The policy document should also include all of the information that students, faculty, and administrative staff require to understand the university's attitude, procedures, and penalties in regards to academic dishonesty. It is also vital that this information be easily accessible, relatively simple to understand and apply, and, most importantly, disseminated to the student body (McCabe and Trevino, 2002).

Culture Change

Another helpful initiative would be to design and incorporate programs that aid in changing the campus culture of the university. A survey by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2008) found that colleges and universities were not doing enough to educate faculty and students about personal and social responsibility (Wasley, 2008). The study surveyed 23,000 undergraduate students and 9,000 faculty members at 23 institutions about how well they felt their campus taught specific qualities, such as moral reasoning and academic integrity. The study concluded that, although students felt that the development of such traits should be of great importance to their institution, many did not feel it was a priority on their campus (Wasley, 2008). This research demonstrated that the campus culture lacked an emphasis towards high morals and ethics that could be cultivated by the institution taking certain initiatives. It is important for students to feel their campus values and emphasizes such qualities so that they are proud to uphold those standards and be a part of such an institution.

In order to achieve a successful culture change, McCabe and Trevino (2002) suggested using rituals or ceremonies to introduce honour codes to incoming students so that they immediately perceived an institutional commitment to academic honesty. Another suggestion was for the institution to put on faculty developmental workshops in which professors learned about anti-cheating strategies and the university's policy and procedures concerning academic integrity (Vandehey, 2002). Vandehey (2002) stated that such workshops helped to establish the administration's strong commitment to support faculty in maintaining academic integrity. These types of workshops also emphasized that the university would not tolerate academic misconduct and that there were proper procedures and penalties in place to address these offences (Vandehey, 2002). Various student clubs could also be created to allow students to take a more

active role in establishing and promoting the importance of academic integrity (Vandehey, 2002). For example, students could teach small workshops to inform first year students about academic integrity valuing campus culture, administer and advertise time management and study skill workshops that help students avoid dishonest behaviour, and/or participate in helping faculty members proctor exams.

Student Responsibility

Another underlying component is that students must accept their responsibility and obligation to abide by ethical standards and should also take pride in doing so (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). It is the student's responsibility to not only police their own personal behaviour, but also that of their fellow classmates. In this framework, students are expected to report any unethical behaviour they observe because that is their duty as a citizen of the campus community. A 2008 study found that four-fifths of students thought that "others cheating was none of their business" and that it was "the professor's job to monitor, detect, and dispatch any cheating" (Petress, 2008: 686). A student submitting the work of another, plagiarizing from past scholars, fabricating research experiments, and a wide range of other unethical acts are very difficult for professors to detect on their own (Petress, 2008). Thus, there must be a collective responsibility to uncover these types of behaviour.

However, Petress argued, "students should not be expected to be snitches" (Petress, 2008: 686). Instead, students should understand that they, in partnership with their instructors and administrators, have a duty to uphold the value of an education. Therefore, students who passively accept forms of cheating or keep it to themselves act as an accomplice to that behaviour. For Petress, "if we knowingly, intentionally, and without guilt allow cheating to occur without stopping, without reporting it, and without condemning it, are we not condoning it and

even promoting it in the eyes of the cheater?" (Petress, 2008: 687). Students must embrace their ethical responsibility to themselves, their fellow classmates, and academia as a whole, and participate in the process of weeding out those who serve to devalue their hard work (Petress, 2008).

In order to create such a community, McCabe and Trevino stressed the importance of all members of the university campus being involved so that a university culture is developed in which academic dishonesty is socially unacceptable (McCabe and Trevino, 1996; McCabe and Makowski, 2001). In this environment, students would take on the responsibility of not only ensuring that they avoided academic dishonesty, but also detecting and reporting observed offences. This policy approach requires an enormous amount of skill and knowledge building about academic dishonesty and this requires that all components of the university community, including staff, faculty, and students, become highly involved (McCabe, 2005).

Knowledge Appreciation

It is apparent that student perception and appreciation of the educational consequences of academic misconduct affects their reasoning process when contemplating committing an act of academic dishonesty. As discussed above, students will often justify cheating or plagiarizing an assignment if they perceive it as an end to a means (Wowra, 2007). However, students who perceive their education as a reward in and of itself, rather than as a means of attaining a well-paying job are less likely to engage in such behaviour (Wowra, 2007). Thus, it is fundamental for universities to promote a knowledge appreciating attitude so that students value their education and do not want to cheat themselves of the experiences and opportunities to learn. A change in university culture would certainly help in creating such a perception. When a student's intention and perception of enrolling in a post-secondary institution is to gain an education, they may feel

that they would be robbing themselves of that opportunity if they chose to engage in academic dishonesty (Wowra, 2007). Given this, it is important to convince new students of this belief so that the remainder of their careers can be without incident.

The intent is that with the above components established, an institution will have an optimal chance of successfully creating the ideal campus culture; a campus culture that has a well-developed academic integrity ethos that emphasizes the university's value system (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Such an institution could be confident that it "conveys that academic integrity is something to revere, honour, and uphold" (Kibler, 1993: 12 as cited in Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Successfully establishing a university whose students, faculty, and administration believes and conveys this message, and displays mutual respect for the policies implemented, would have a very beneficial effect on academic dishonesty (McCabe et al., 2001).

Instruction to Prevent Plagiarism

This policy recommendation emphasizes a change in attitude and campus culture in order to create an ethical community that has clearly communicated rules and standards (McCabe et. al., 2001). However, it is important to recognize and address the difficulties of implementing such a recommendation. For example, a portion of academic dishonesty occurs unintentionally; this is especially prevalent in plagiarism cases (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). In these instances, the student is not lacking in responsibility and ethics, but rather the skills to appropriately cite the material they used for the assignment. In other words, a student may not have taken the time to learn how to properly provide sources according to a specific formula. Or, the student may believe that they are sourcing correctly when they are not following the rules of citation. To the degree that this is the issue, instructors need information and tools to teach about academic dishonesty and students need the knowledge and skill to produce ethically sound

material (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995; Burke et al., 2007). It is imperative that institutions recognize that this culture change will only be successful if it is accompanied with education and training on the subject.

It is often assumed that students have received training in how to avoid plagiarism in high school and, therefore, are not taught these skills in universities (Coalter et al., 2007). However, "learning to avoid plagiarism is a process of learning conventions and customs, not an instantaneous event" (Price, 2002 as cited in Chanock, 2008: 9). University professors must take an active role in not only continuing to teach students the art of attribution, but also understand that "it is an act of building community, collaboratively constructing shared knowledge" (Rose, 1996 as cited in Chanock, 2008: 9). Students need to be informed about the rules of scholarship and the purpose of acknowledging past scholarly works (Chanock, 2007). The goal is not merely to reduce cheating, but to educate and develop responsible students who will go on to be responsible citizens (McCabe, 2005). Therefore, McCabe (2005) suggested that as educators, faculty members should make every effort to consider the majority of cheating incidents as educational opportunities. Although sanctions can and should be used for more serious types of academic offences, the majority of academic dishonesty incidents are not very serious and, therefore, alternative strategies are required, such as academic dishonesty worksheets and/or workshops that are educational and teach students the importance of academic integrity.

Faculty and Administration Responsibility

It is critical for instructors to take on the responsibility of incorporating the teaching of these skills into their curriculum (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995). It is also vital that institutions do more to better educate students about using the work of past scholars, and to educate faculty about the difficulty of learning this practice, as well as their function in further teaching it

(Chanock, 2008). As the definition of academic dishonesty further develops and changes, it is important for faculty members to not only fully understand what it encompasses, but also to inform students by providing examples of what is and is not acceptable in their classroom (Schmelkin, 2008). As the electronic world becomes even more sophisticated, current trends will change which require professors to keep up with reviewing and updating their knowledge about various forms of academic deviance (Schmelkin, 2008).

Educational institutions should also do their part to ensure that faculty members have the appropriate administrative staff and tools to take on such a responsibility. Although faculty members have the ability to play a major role in addressing academic dishonesty, they cannot be expected to do this alone (McCabe, 2005). It is absolutely fundamental that the people who are supposed to be implementing a policy have the confidence and belief in the proper functioning and purpose of that policy (Gulli et al., 2007), and that administrators take the initiative of reviewing dated policies and making appropriate changes (McCabe, 2005).

Simon et al. (2003) conducted a study to examine faculty responses to suspected acts of academic dishonesty and found that faculty members who had trust and faith in their university processes were much more likely to utilize the complete range of options outlined in their university's policies when addressing these types of acts. However, faculty members who were sceptical about their institution's processes tended to abstain from using administrative strategies and dealt with the suspected students in a private manner which often involved bargaining. Lovett-Hooper et al. (2007) also recommended that institutions highlight certain items for their faculty members, such as the fact that many studies demonstrate the increased likelihood of unethical behaviour continuing in the student's future line of work and personal life. This is likely to further encourage professors who may still be reluctant to address cheating.

Organizational Change

In general, any successful organizational change requires "a multifaceted, collaborative effort" (Alschuler and Blimling, 1995: 122). Therefore, all parties should be involved in the development of key components, such as an honour code and academic integrity policy. Student learning and academic integrity will continue to be comprised unless students, faculty, and institution administrators make a concerted effort to combat and prevent it (Leonard and LeBrasseur, 2008). All parties need to fully support the initiative and be involved in the process so that they continue to believe in it. A general principle of organizational psychology is that people are more likely to abide by a policy that they have taken part in developing than one simply imposed upon them by superiors (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Representatives from all interest groups who will be affected by the policies and/or key elements should be involved in the process of creating and updating policies. It is especially important to have students involved in the policy development process because they are the party that must abide by the rules and will be penalized for outlined offences (Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). Whitley and Keith Spiegel (2002) stated that students being involved in this process increased student perceptions that the penalties and procedures were fair. Ultimately, the entire community on the campus must work cohesively in order to establish this desired ethical community (McCabe, 2005: 29).

Toronto's Ryerson University (2010) is a great example of a Canadian university that seems to be taking this proactive approach. The university developed an elaborate academic integrity website that provides faculty, current students, former graduates, and family members information about academic dishonesty. The website is separated into various sections with each section devoted to a particular group of individuals and provides information and resources

exclusively designed for that group. For example, the student section features information on topics, such as what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, how to avoid inappropriate collaboration, and why not to use paper mills (http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity/, 2010). This section also includes information about why it is in the student's best interest to avoid participating in acts of dishonesty and what resources are available to aid them in doing so.

Another section of the website is devoted entirely to the faculty members at Ryerson University and it discusses their responsibilities, why students cheat, and prevention, detection, reporting resources and support (Ryerson University, 2010). The University has essentially incorporated all the information faculty require if they had any questions and/or concerns about understanding or dealing with an academic dishonesty issue. This website is a great tool for professors and teacher's assistants because it not only provides an abundance of information on the topic, but it is also well organized and easy to navigate.

When further examining the website, it is clear that the university prides itself in providing students and faculty with information to understand why academic dishonesty is unacceptable at their university (Ryerson University, 2010). It takes a values and morals oriented approach in which students are encouraged to be responsible and ethical. For example, on each section of their academic integrity website, it reads, "Don't compromise yourself, you're all you've got – Janis Joplin" (2008). This is a powerful message directed toward their student population to further emphasize the importance of taking pride in maintaining their academic integrity. Seeing as this is a recent undertaking by Ryerson University, researchers have not yet evaluated the successes and/or failures encountered since implementation. It is important for universities to make these types of changes, and, as discussed, any institutional change will require a collective effort from all university members, including faculty and students. The

institution must establish an honour code and commit to promoting the value of integrity so that a total campus culture change can be achieved. Instructors must be supported and educated about how to deal with academic integrity incidents and students must also be provided with the knowledge, education, and skills that will allow them to appreciate and maintain their academic integrity. There are no guaranteed solutions for addressing academic dishonesty, but the discussed policy recommendations are a starting point that could prove to be beneficial to academic institutions. After introduction, these types of plans must be researched and evaluated to determine what works best for each institution.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

There is definitely a need to continue research in the area of academic dishonesty to further understand how best to address it. The current literature indicates that academic dishonesty is a growing problem within universities across Canada and the United States (Gilli et al., 2007). Many universities have out-dated or inadequate policies that are not successful in deterring or adequately addressing acts of academic misconduct. The increasing and constantly developing world of technology has served to further perpetuate the epidemic of cheating. Given this, policy makers must take technological innovations, such as the internet and World Wide Web, into account when designing their institutional policies. The proactive policy recommendation made in this major paper is a potential solution, although it is an extremely challenging objective that will require the support, efforts, and will of the entire university community. A change in policy is desperately required considering the ramifications academic dishonesty could have on the reputation of academia and society as a whole. Perhaps through further research and policy implementation, North American universities will be able to control this epidemic and develop responsible scholars who truly value their academic integrity. Taking pride in maintaining their high level of morals and ethics not only throughout their academic careers, but for the rest of their lives is a critical objective and value that must be re-enforced in universities. The ultimate objective is to create a culture in which the students perceive academic dishonesty as socially unacceptable behaviour.

In order to successfully accomplish this, students must be aware of what exactly constitutes academic dishonesty. The problems with defining academic dishonesty must also be researched and addressed (Schmelkin et al., 2008). The definition of academic dishonesty has changed over the years, and it will continue to change with the times in terms of exactly which

behaviours should be included. For example, with the addition of the internet came a number of new academic dishonesty infractions associated with this new technology. Perhaps a more workable definition will be broader in scope and objective so that any behaviour that puts the reputation of academia into disrepute is considered academic dishonesty. What constitutes academic dishonesty will likely always require review and education for both instructors and students; however, addressing academic dishonesty requires creating a feasible definition (Schmelkin et al., 2008).

The majority of studies and research examining the causes of academic dishonesty have focused on describing the relationships between various causal variables; however, the work has paid little attention to theoretical integration or a cohesive explanation of this epidemic (Bolin, 2004). Therefore, contributing further research to this field that examines academic dishonesty within the theoretically abundant context of deviant behaviour could prove to be beneficial. Deviant behaviour is thoroughly examined within the context of empirically supported theories and perhaps academic dishonesty should also be examined within this context in order to determine an explanation for this type of delinquency (Bolin, 2004). Exploring it within this context will provide a new perspective that may produce new information that can assist in addressing academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty certainly has the attention of scholars, administrators, and society at large. Thus, great efforts have been made to understand, respond, and prevent this form of deviance. It is a phenomenon that is not likely to be ever completely eradicated; however, there is hope that through further research and development, it is possible to better define, identify, and appropriately respond to acts of academic dishonesty and misconduct.

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